

**IN THE CLAIMS:**

1. (Currently Amended) In a search engine user interface (UI), a method for providing search inquiry syntax help, the method comprising:

presenting a search engine user interface with a selectable user interface edit box for formulating a search request;

selecting the formulating a search engine search request edit box; and,

in response to selecting the search request edit box, automatically supplying search syntax help including [[the]] a popup window display of search syntax characters supported by the search engine.

2. Canceled

3. (Currently Amended) The method of claim [[2]] 1 wherein displaying search syntax characters supported by the search engine includes displaying search syntax characters selected from the group including connectors and operators.

4. (Original) The method of claim 3 wherein automatically supplying search syntax help includes displaying search syntax character definitions.

5. (Original) The method of claim 3 wherein automatically supplying search syntax help includes supplying a list of frequently-used search syntax characters.

6. (Original) The method of claim 3 wherein automatically supplying search syntax help includes displaying a list of every supported search syntax character.

7. (Original) The method of claim 3 wherein automatically supplying search syntax help includes displaying examples in which the search syntax characters are used.

8. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 7 further comprising:  
~~wherein subsequent to selecting the search request edit box,~~  
formulating a search engine search request ~~includes forming a search request with~~ at least one search term and a first search syntax character;  
and,  
wherein supplying examples in which the search syntax characters are used includes supplying an example in which the first search syntax character modifies the search term.

9. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 7 further comprising:  
~~wherein subsequent to selecting the search request edit box,~~  
formulating a search engine search request ~~includes forming a search request with~~ a plurality of search syntax characters; and,  
wherein supplying examples in which the search syntax characters are used includes supplying an example in which the plurality of search syntax characters modify search terms.

10. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 8

further comprising:

~~wherein subsequent to selecting the search request edit box,~~  
formulating a search engine search request ~~includes forming a search~~  
~~request with a first and second search term; and,~~

wherein supplying examples in which the search syntax  
characters are used includes supplying an example in which the first  
search term is linked to the second search term using the first search  
syntax character.

11. (Original) The method of claim 3 further  
comprising:

following the formulating of a search engine search request,  
submitting the search request to the search engine; and,  
in response to submitting the search request, automatically  
closing the search syntax help popup window.

12. (Original) The method of claim 11 further  
comprising:

displaying the results of the search;  
editing the search engine search request; and,  
in response to the editing the search request, automatically  
supplying search syntax help.

13. (Original) The method of claim 3 further  
comprising:

following the formulating of a search engine search request,  
changing the focus of the search engine user interface; and,  
in response to changing the search engine user interface  
focus, automatically closing the search syntax help popup window.

14. (Original) The method of claim 1 further  
comprising:  
providing a user selectable syntax help enablement option;  
and,  
wherein automatically supplying search syntax help includes  
supplying search syntax help in response enabling the syntax help option.

15. (Original) The method of claim 3 further  
comprising:  
providing user selectable search syntax help configuration  
options; and,  
wherein automatically supplying search syntax help includes  
supplying search syntax help configured in response to the search syntax  
help configuration options.

16. (Original) The method of claim 15 wherein  
providing user selectable search syntax help configuration options  
includes providing a popup window with frequently-used search syntax  
characters as a default configuration.

17. (Original) The method of claim 15 wherein  
providing user selectable search syntax help configuration options

includes providing a popup window with a list of every supported search syntax character as a default configuration.

18. (Original) A search engine user interface (UI) with search inquiry syntax help, the user interface comprising:  
a selectable focus edit box for inputting a search request to a search engine; and,  
a search syntax help popup window that automatically appears in response to selecting the edit box.

19. (Original) The user interface of claim 18 wherein the search syntax help popup window displays search syntax characters supported by the search engine, where the search syntax characters are selected from the group including connectors and operators.

20. (Original) The user interface of claim 19 wherein the search syntax help popup window displays search syntax character definitions.

21. (Original) The user interface of claim 19 wherein the search syntax help popup window displays a list of frequently-used search syntax characters.

22. (Original) The user interface of claim 19 wherein the search syntax help popup window displays a list of every supported search syntax character.

23. (Original) The user interface of claim 19 wherein  
the search-syntax-help-popup window displays examples in which the  
search syntax characters are used.

24. (Original) The user interface of claim 23 wherein  
the edit box accepts a first search syntax character and at least one search  
term input; and,  
wherein the syntax help popup window displays an example  
in which the first search syntax character modifies the search term.

25. (Original) The user interface of claim 23  
wherein the edit box accepts a plurality of search syntax  
character inputs; and,  
wherein the syntax help popup window displays an example  
in which the plurality of search syntax characters that modify search  
terms.

26. (Original) The user interface of claim 24 wherein  
the edit box accepts a first and second search term input; and,  
wherein the syntax help popup window displays an example  
in which the first search term is linked to the second search term using  
the first search syntax character.

27. (Original) The user interface of claim 18 further  
comprising:  
a window to display the results of the submitted search  
engine search request; and,

wherein the search syntax help popup window closes in  
response the search engine search request being submitted.

28. (Original) The user interface of claim 27 wherein  
the edit box is reselected for editing, following the display of the search  
results; and,

wherein the search syntax help popup window automatically  
reappears in response to the reselecting the edit box.

29. (Original) The user interface of claim 18 further  
comprising:

at least a second selectable user interface focus; and,

wherein the search syntax help popup window closes in  
response the second user interface focus being selected.

30. (Original) The user interface of claim 18 further  
comprising:

a configuration menu with a user selectable check box to  
enable the syntax help popup window; and,

wherein the search syntax help popup window appears in  
response to the configuration check box being selected.

31. (Original) The user interface of claim 30 wherein  
the configuration menu provides search syntax help configuration options  
with default settings; and,

wherein the search syntax help popup window displays  
frequently-used search syntax characters as a default configuration.

~~32. (Original) - The user interface of claim 30 wherein~~  
the configuration menu provides search syntax help configuration options  
with default settings; and,  
wherein the search syntax help popup window displays a list  
of every supported search syntax character as a default configuration.

33. (Currently Amended) The user interface of claim  
30 wherein the configuration menu provides search syntax help  
configuration options with default settings; and,  
wherein the search syntax help popup window displays  
examples of how search syntax characters are used as a default  
configuration.

34. (Original) The user interface of claim 18 wherein  
the search syntax help popup window is responsive to the search request  
input into the edit box.